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Courtesy ALWAYS TRIUMPHS

by George Matthew Adams

It was late afternoon in a great New York Department Store. Already many clerks were putting scattered stock away and making ready for closing time. Others were chatting happily, for soon they would be leaving for their homes.

Just at this time a plainly clothed woman came down one of the aisles, walking slowly as though confused as to at what counter she wished to buy. Many clerks merely gave her a fleeting glance. Others saw her as a possible customer -- but paid no attention for they were more interested in powdering their faces or arranging an evening's engagement.

One young man, however, was distinctly on the job, and rushed over to inquire how he could serve this customer. It was a simple purchase, and she apologized for taking up his time at such a late hour of the day. The young man assured her that it was a pleasure to serve her, and that it was no trouble to show her all the samples she wished to see. She thanked him and asked for his card.

Just one of those everyday business transactions in a big store, and thus it was that the young man considered it. Months went by, and one day the big store received a letter from a noted woman who lived in Scotland. She wanted her home reddecorated and named the man she wished to come and superintend the work and get the credit for the order. The store protested and said the young man named was but a clerk and wouldn't she let the store select the right person. The woman insisted that the young man named, and none other, should come and that the order would be cancelled otherwise. The young man was the one who had

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waited upon Mrs. Andrew Carnegie that late afternoon.

Courtesy has never lost in a test of strength. It always wins! The gracious courtesy of the salesperson in the store, or the reception girl in an office, or the policeman upon his beat, or the hotel clerk or the head of the business, is something of greater import than a big balance in the bank. The public is sold in terms of courtesy.

A stranger came into the dining room of a Chicago hotel many years ago. There was nothing about his personality to suggest eminence in any line of endeavor. But he was kindly and smiled at the waiter as he was seated. He explained that he didn't understand much about the fancy menus in big hotels and would the waiter please bring him a bowl of milk and some corn bread. This was done and he continued a pleasant conversation with the waiter who neglected no opportunity to be pleasant and kindly in turn to the gentleman who apparently was unacquainted with big city ways though a well-to-do man of the soil from some Western state. The simple meal was finished, the waiter was thanked for his courtesy and was handed a five dollar tip!

The one thing I recall with vividness about the play, "Abraham Lincoln" by John Drinkwater, which was so popular a few years ago, was the way he brought out the politeness of the great president. There was always a "Thank you" for everyone who served him, no matter how humble.

Courtesy is one of the golden traits of character. Through its cultivation and use, men and women have climbed the stairs to eminence and greatness.

No matter where you work, no matter who you are, or what you do, courtesy is essential if you would be respected, beloved, and outstanding as a human being in a rather mixed up, selfish world.